Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Southern Metropolitan Region

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) asked businesses about their skills, recruitment and training needs for the Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021.

Findings from the survey will help the Victorian government identify areas of skills demand, drive innovation across the VET sector and better plan for Victoria’s future training needs.

The VSA conducted the survey between August and December 2021. It approached 70,000 businesses and achieved a response rate of 20.5%, with coverage across all industries, business sizes and regions in the state.

*The statistics below reflect the experience of employers across the five key survey domains:*

#### Business climate | Skills | Recruitment | Training | Apprentices, trainees and work placements

## Business climate

#### **Despite the global pandemic, many Southern Metropolitan employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.**

#### Workforce

The majority of employers maintained or grew their workforce over the past 12 months, with rates similar to the state average.

**Grew**

Southern Metropolitan Region 19%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Southern Metropolitan Region 19%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Southern Metropolitan Region 61%

Vic Avg 61%

**Don’t know**

Southern Metropolitan Region 1%

#### Outlook

Employers in the Southern Metropolitan region are optimistic about their future growth. More expected their workforce to remain the same size compared to the state average.

**Predict growth**

Southern Metropolitan Region 33%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Southern Metropolitan Region 58%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Southern Metropolitan Region 4%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in the Southern Metropolitan region were similar to the state average.

**Skills-related challenges**

Southern Metropolitan Region 56%

Vic Avg 57%

**Adapted new ways of working related to COVID-19**

Southern Metropolitan Region 45%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Southern Metropolitan Region 26%

Vic Avg 26%

## Skills

COVID-19 presented the most common skills challenge in the past year. More employers are expecting skills shortages in 2022 than in 2021.

#### Skills shortages

One in five employers in the Southern Metropolitan region expect to face skills shortages in 2022. This was similar to the state average.

**Last 12 months**

Southern Metropolitan Region 16%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Southern Metropolitan Region 20%

Vic Avg 21%

#### Skills challenges

The top skills challenges reported by employers were the same across all regions. They were:

**Finding candidates with the right skills**

Southern Metropolitan Region 48%

Vic Avg 47%

**Adapting to the new ways of working due to COVID-19**

Southern Metropolitan Region 45%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Southern Metropolitan Region 36%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

More employers in the region reported needing job-ready skills or workers with the right attitude or mindset compared to the state average.

**Technical/job-specific skills**

Southern Metropolitan Region 76%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Southern Metropolitan Region 55%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Southern Metropolitan Region 54%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

Most Southern Metropolitan employers had undertaken some recruitment activity over the past year and the majority reported experiencing challenges.

Recruitment need

More employers undertook some form of recruitment over the past 12 months, compared to the state average.

Southern Metropolitan Region 64%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

Fewer employers reported difficulties recruiting for particular roles compared to the state average.   
  
Southern Metropolitan Region 75%

Vic Avg 76%

Type of challenge

The most common challenges faced by employers were related to the number, experience and job-specific skills of candidates.

**Few applicants**

Southern Metropolitan Region 62%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Southern Metropolitan Region 49%

Vic Avg 50%

**Candidates lacked relevant technical/job-specific skills**

Southern Metropolitan Region 49%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

More than half of Southern Metropolitan employers engaged in some form of training.

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the region used internal training compared to the state average. Over one third (36%) used both internal and external training.  
 **Internal training**

Southern Metropolitan Region 20%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Southern Metropolitan Region 44%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

Levels of satisfaction with training were high overall, but slightly lower for quality and price than the state average.   
  
**Helped staff do their job better**

Southern Metropolitan Region 81%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Southern Metropolitan Region 80%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Southern Metropolitan Region 73%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Southern Metropolitan Region 66%

Vic Avg 71%

**Skillsets**

Three in five employers said they would consider a skillset (micro credential or part qualification) rather than a full qualification to upskill their staff.

Southern Metropolitan Region 60%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Southern Metropolitan employers continue to make use of apprentices, trainees, and work placements to assist them in filling the skills pipeline.

**Apprentices and trainees**

Uptake of apprentices and trainees over the past 12 months was slightly lower than the state average.

**Apprenticeship**

Southern Metropolitan Region 23%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Southern Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Employers cited lack of suitable applicants, cost and need for apprentices and trainees as the most common barriers.

**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Southern Metropolitan Region 19%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Southern Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 17%

**Cost of taking on apprentice(s)/trainee(s)**

Southern Metropolitan Region 15%

Vic Avg 14%

**Work placement students**

Fewer employers in the region took on work placement students (18% compared to 21% for Victoria). The most common type of work placement students were:

**University student**

Southern Metropolitan Region 53%

Vic Avg 49%

**Secondary school student as part of work experience**

Southern Metropolitan Region 38%

Vic Avg 41%

**Secondary school student as part of a VET qualification**

Southern Metropolitan Region 24%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Southern Metropolitan Region 19%

Vic Avg 19%

**View the complete report here or visit** [Victorian employer skills survey | Victorian Government (www.vic.gov.au)](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-employer-skills-survey)